

Letters from the Library

"There shall be ... a library ... known as the state library"
An Act to provide for a State Library – General Laws, 1838

August 2016

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State Library Hours

Monday – Friday
8am – 5pm

Library Staff

Stephen Parks – State Librarian

Cassandra Noel – Circulation Librarian

LaTavius Jackson – Reference Librarian

Judy Reedy – Catalog Librarian

Portrait Found and Identified,

by Stephen Parks

During my first week of work here as State Librarian, I began to go through my new office to see what all was left behind by Clara Joorfetz, who had retired in December 2015. Underneath a bunch of folders in a filing cabinet, I found a folder with nothing written on it except a sticky note with the words "Charlie Pearce." Charlie Pearce had served as State Librarian from 2000 to 2008. Inside the folder was a portrait that was definitely not of Charlie Pearce.

The portrait was black-and-white and of a woman. It had no date on it. It had no name on it. Always enjoying a good research hunt, I decided to try and identify the woman. After about a month of researching at the Archives, on Google, and in old *Clarion Ledgers*, I found out the Old Capitol Museum had a mock set up of the old State Library. Visiting with the staff of the Old Capitol Museum, I was able to identify the portrait based off of items held by the Museum.

The lady in the portrait ended up being Helen D. Bell, State Librarian 1896-1900.

A native of Canton, Bell attended East Mississippi Female College. She was the first woman to pass the civil service examination in the State, and she served as a clerk and stenographer for the Supreme Court.

Prior to her election as State Librarian, she was hailed in newspapers as one with "great force of character, womanly dignity, and loyalty to friends." *Continued on page 2*



She competed against “a number of charming ladies, cultured, competent, and fascinating,” and won the post of State Librarian after ten ballots in the joint session of the House of Representatives and Senate in 1896.

When it was time for her to run for reelection, she was described by the Library Trustees as “efficient, conscientious, and faithful” to her post as Librarian. She was so faithful to the job that as many state officials fled Jackson during a yellow-fever scare, she remained in the city to keep the State Library open for business. She lost in her reelection contest to Mattie Plunkett.

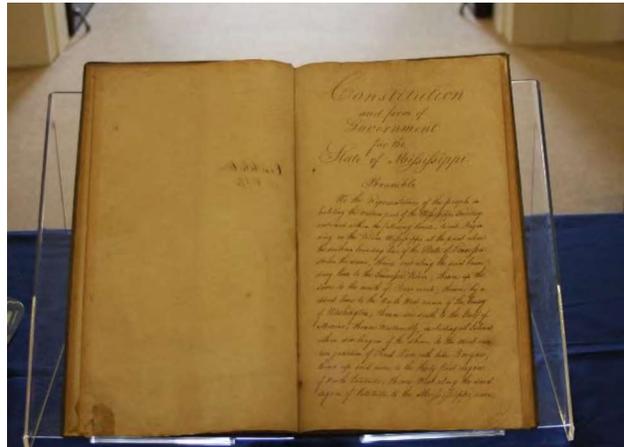
After her time as State Librarian, Bell became very active in the United Daughters of the Confederacy, serving as state president, where she led efforts to preserve Mississippi’s battlefields and to organize supply drives for Mississippi’s Civil War veterans.

The portrait of Helen D. Bell is now on display in the State Library.

State Constitution Display a Success

The Library hosted a display of the original 1817 Mississippi Constitution on April 12, 2016. Between 80-90 people stopped by the Library to view the Constitution. Staff from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History were on hand to answer questions and to assist visitors in viewing the almost two hundred year old document.

The Constitution is currently on display in the Old Capitol Museum as it waits to start to travel the State as part of a traveling exhibit this fall and next spring in the run-up to the State’s bicentennial celebrations.

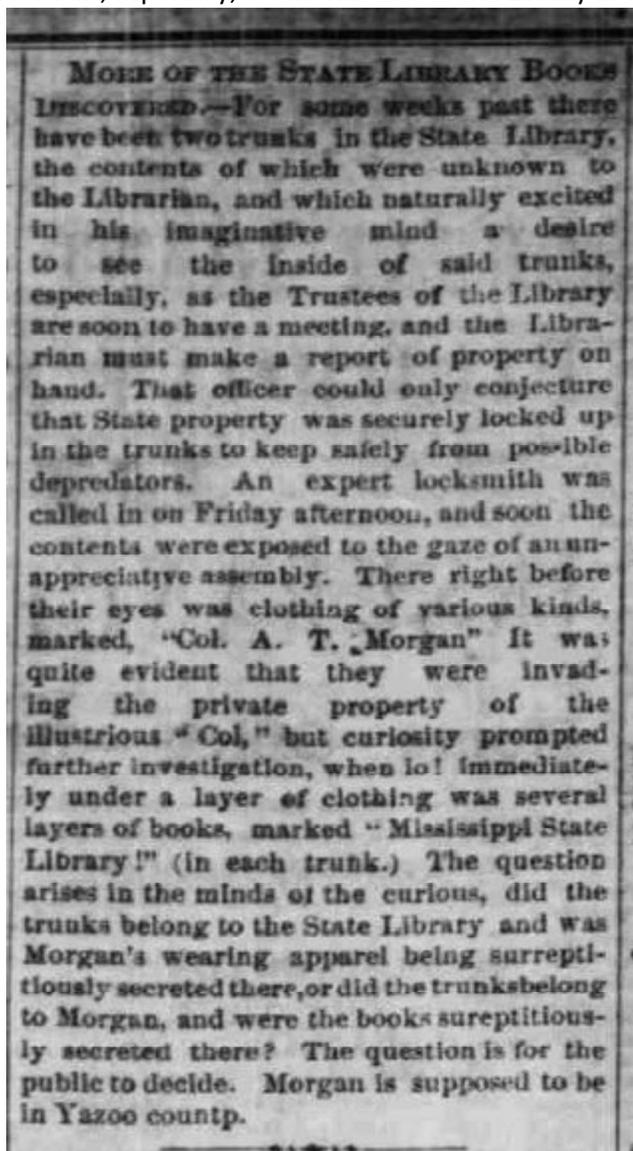


Looking Back: The State Library in History

From the *Clarion Ledger*, Thursday, December 8, 1870

“More of the State Library Books Uncovered – For some weeks past there have been two trunks in the State Library, the contents of which were unknown to the Librarian, and which naturally excited in his

imaginative mind a desire to see the inside of said trunks, especially, as the Trustees of the Library are soon to have a meeting, and the Librarian must make a report of property on hand. That officer could only conjecture that State property was securely locked up in the trunks to keep safely from possible depredators. An expert locksmith was called in on Friday afternoon, and soon the contents were exposed to the gaze of an unappreciative assembly. There right before their eyes was clothing of various kinds, marked, "Col. A. T. Morgan." It was quite evident that they were invading the private property of the illustrious "Col," but curiosity prompted further investigation, when lo! immediately under a layer of clothing was several layers of books, marked "Mississippi State Library!" (in each trunk). The question arises in the minds of the curious, did the trunks belong to the State Library and was Morgan's wearing apparel being surreptitiously secreted there, or did the trunks belong to Morgan, and were the books surreptitiously secreted there? The question is for the public to decide. Morgan is supposed to be in Yazoo county."



New Online Resource!



The Library now provides to its users the online resource HeinOnline. From Hein's Web site, it is described as a "premier online product with more than 120 million pages of legal history available in an online, fully-searchable, image-based format."

Our specific subscription includes the following:

- Law Journal Library: Contains more than 2,200 law and law-related periodicals
- Code of Federal Regulations: Contains all volumes dating back to inception (1938)

- Federal Register Library: Coverage dating back to its inception (1936)
- Session Laws: Contains the session laws of all 50 states back to each state's inception
- State Statutes – Historical Archive: Includes superseded statutes for all 50 states
- US Federal Legislative History Library
- And much more!

A username and password is needed to login to <http://heinonline.org/>. Those within the Court Complex may contact the Library to receive our login credentials.

We hope to have Hein representatives at the Library this fall to provide training to those within the Court Complex who might be interested.

You've got Questions – We (hopefully) have Answers

We routinely get reference questions from within the Court as well as outside the Court. Here's just a sample of those questions:

- Legislative materials for Mississippi's vaccination laws
- PEER Reports 258 and 259
- Who sponsored Erin's Law in Mississippi?
- Tree-cutting statute from the 1906 Mississippi Code
- Local & Private laws creating Highland Colony Parkway
- Does the Library carry Mississippi Reports for 1820-1831?

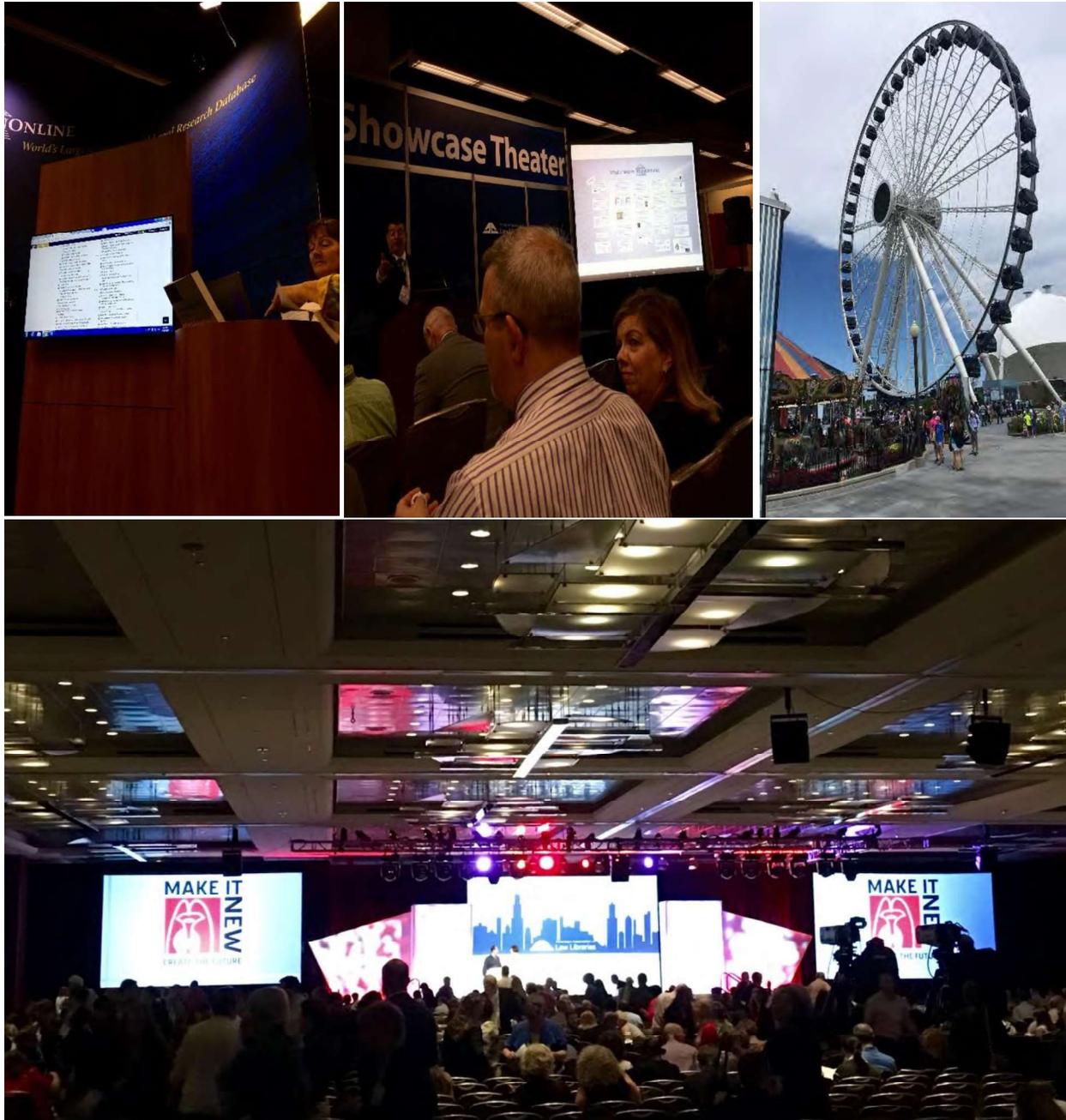
Book Drive Successful

Thank you to all who donated books to the Library's Book Drive. In all, we received a total of 32 books. These books were taken to the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) Annual Meeting in Chicago. AALL selects each year a book drive recipient in the Annual Meeting's host city. This year's recipient was Bernie's Book Bank. Bernie's Book Bank distributes books to infant children through those in the sixth grade. Each child served by Bernie's receives a minimum of twelve books per year.



Scenes from AALL 2016 in Chicago

With the theme “Make it New: Create the Future,” the American Association of Law Libraries convened in Chicago this July. Vendors such as Thomson Reuters, Lexis Nexis, HeinOnline and many more were on hand to demonstrate the latest improvements in their legal research products. Panel sessions were held where law librarians spoke on wide-ranging topics such as copyright law, cataloging trends, legal research training and so much more.





New Titles Added to the Collection

An Estate Planner's Guide to Qualified Retirement Plan Benefits, Louis A. Mezzullo, KF 3512 .Z9 M49 2016

Federal Appellate Practice, KF 9050 .F43 2013

Hotel, Restaurant, and Travel Law: A Preventive Approach, Karen L. Morris, KF 951 .C6 2008

The Invention of Legal Research, Joseph L. Gerken, KF 240 .G47 2016

The Rights of the Accused under the Sixth Amendment: Trial, Presentation of Evidence, and Confrontation, Paul Marcus, KF 4558 6th . R54 2016

Trends in State Courts, KF 8732 .F87 2016

America Votes! A Guide to Modern Election Law and Voting Rights, KF 4486 .A86 2016

One Hundred Days before Trial: A Family Lawyer's Guide to Preparation and Strategy, Steven N. Peskind, KF 505.5 .P47 2015

Representing Parents in Child Welfare Cases: Advice and Guidance for Family Defenders, Vivek S. Sankaran, KF 8925 .C45 S26 2015